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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Dear Mr. Moss:

On August 19, 1970, we reported to you on our inquiry into the merger of Headquarters, Ground Electronics Engineering Installation Agency, with Headquarters, Air Force Communications Service (AFCS). You had asked whether the merger would require the Air Force to further expand the on-base telephone system at Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base, Missouri.

We advised you that firm information on projected telephone communications requirements for Richards-Gebaur was not available at that time; that we would follow up this matter at an appropriate future date; and that we would inquire into whether AFCS planned to expand the telephone facilities to be used by Headquarters, Southern Communications Area, at either Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, or Oklahoma City Air Force Station, Oklahoma.

In our inquiries we found that the Air Force did not plan to expand those systems. At Richards-Gebaur, Headquarters, AFCS, officials advised us that they had no plans to expand the telephone system beyond the capacity of 1,600 lines which was provided for at the time of the merger and that they would not consider expansion unless the utilization of the system exceeded 93 percent, or 1,488 lines.

This rate of utilization was attained in July 1971; however, AFCS made a concerted effort to reduce the utilization which brought it down to 88 percent, or 1,408 lines, as of September 1971. This reduction, according to those officials, will provide a buffer for possible future requirements. They stated, however, that, if a large organization should relocate to Richards-Gebaur, the buffer would not be sufficient and expansion of the system would become necessary.

In addition to holding discussions with AFCS officials, we examined the proposed fiscal year 1972 AFCS operating budget for Richards-Gebaur that had been submitted to Headquarters, AFCS, for approval. It showed that \$228,300 had been budgeted for the

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telephone system. This is an increase of \$36,900 over the budgeted cost for fiscal year 1971; and, according to the budget document, was intended to cover increased utilization of the system from 1,400 lines to 1,500 lines. AFCS officials were of the opinion, however, that, since the utilization of the system had been reduced to 88 percent, the fiscal year 1972 cost would probably be only slightly more than the cost projected for fiscal year 1971. On the basis of this information, it appears that expenditures for operation of the telephone system during fiscal year 1972 will not be significantly increased.

At Headquarters, Southern Communications Area, Oklahoma City Air Force Station, we were informed by AFCS officials that the headquarters' telephone service was provided by the station's telephone system. Therefore we did not inquire into the status of the system at Tinker Air Force Base, since that system was not involved in the merger.

The officials advised us that AFCS did not plan to expand the telephone system serving the headquarters beyond the capacity of 400 lines which existed at the time of the merger. Headquarters is presently using 253 lines, or about 63 percent of the system's capacity, and is attempting to reduce that rate of utilization.

We trust that the information presented is responsive to your needs. We shall be pleased to render any further assistance you may desire.

We are not providing the Department of the Air Force with copies of this report. We plan to make no further distribution of this report unless copies are specifically requested, and then we shall make distribution only after your agreement has been obtained or public announcement has been made by you concerning the contents of the report.

Sincerely yours,


Deputy] Comptroller General
of the United States

61 The Honorable John E. Moss
House of Representatives